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Washington Merry-Go-Round

By JACK ANDERSON

WASHINGTON — Behind the Greek military posturing in the Mediterranean, confidential NATO documents warn that the Greek armed forces are so divided and weak they couldn't whip the Turkish army in a badminton match.

A May, 1974, draft report to the North Atlantic Assembly declares bluntly: "The effect upon the (Greek) armed forces of almost seven years of dictatorship, accompanied by periodic upheavals and a succession of savage purges, has been severely to distort their command structure and to create an atmosphere of suspicion and antagonism among factions of the officer corps with differing political views and sharply divided loyalties."

Nevertheless, the Nixon Administration has insisted upon backing the Greek junta. As late as June 26, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger testified before the Senate that "as far as the military side of the alliance is concerned, Greece remains an effective member."

This is disputed by confidential NATO information, which is available to Schlesinger. States one document: "There are growing doubts about the extent to which the Greek armed forces as a whole, disunited as they are and dissipated by police and supervisory functions, are capable of playing their part in the NATO defense strategy."

From other classified documents and confidential sources, we have gleaned the following intelligence items about the explosive situation in the Mediterranean:

— The Nixon Administration, in the language of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, is "tilting" toward the Greek officers who overthrew Archbishop Makarios in Cyprus. Kissinger realizes this is an unpopular position among State Department bureaucrats and European allies. Indeed, he has already started leaking stories about how agonized he is by the necessity to support military dictators. But he sees the new junta leader, Nikos Sampson, as preferable to Makarios.

— The ruthless Sampson, formerly a guerrilla assassin, has been receiving secret CIA financial support for years. Our CIA sources say this is merely the intelligence agency's standard hedge of supporting both sides in a dispute. But Sampson, now a rich newspaperman, received money to support his publishing empire through Savyas Konstantopoulos, publisher of the Athens Free World. Konstantopoulos, say our sources, has long been on the CIA payroll.

— For that matter, Archbishop Makarios also collected CIA cash. Extremely reliable sources told us that Makarios simply blackmailed the CIA. If the agency wanted to keep its extensive facilities on Cyprus, Makarios allegedly told them, they had to pay for the privilege.

— President Nixon and Secretary Kissinger appear to be the last holdouts in the free world in their support of the Greek and Cyprus juntas. According to one confidential NATO document, our European allies have been eager "to hasten the transfer of power from unsophisticated and parochial military men...to a political government enjoying the confidence of the people."

— Sources who have been reliable in the past say even the CIA has given up on the Greek junta and is secretly pulling its main facilities out of Greece. The CIA reportedly is transferring many important functions from Athens to Teheran, in the apparent belief that the Shah of Iran is a safer bet than the Greek military dictatorship.

HAYS HOLLERS: The terrible-tempered Rep. Wayne Hays, D-Ohio, has tried to kick muckraker Ralph Nader's reporters out of public hearings. "You're nothing but a crummy thieving bunch of liars," roared Hays at a Nader reporter after a recent hearing. "If I'd known you were in there, I would have thrown you out." The Nader news bureau's stories about Hays have so infuriated him that he asked two subscribing papers to cancel the service, he told us. From there on, he'll try to bar them from the press tables.

INDISCREET MEMO: Housing Undersecretary Floyd Hyde recently picked up his papers and left the government to join McManis Associates consulting firm. Not long afterward, his subcabinet colleague, Transportation Undersecretary John Barnum, sent a memo to his underlings suggesting that they keep Hyde in mind "in case you have any problems for consultants that he might be able to help you with." In bureaucratic Washington, this is practically an order to hire Hyde's firm. Cautioned about the impropriety, Barnum hurried off a second letter nine days later saying he feared the first one "may be misconstrued," thus, in effect, withdrawing it.

SEX APPEALS: The brass hats at Ft. Hood, Tex., recently advertised for "go-go dancers" to perform in its 12 clubs for officers and noncoms. A spokesman assured us that the bikini-clad girls are paid from club profits. Not to be outdone, Wurtsmith Air Force Base, Mass., placed an ad for a belly dancing instructor. "It's for a physical education class for women," said a spokesman. "There's quite a bit of physical fitness required for the fine art of belly dancing."